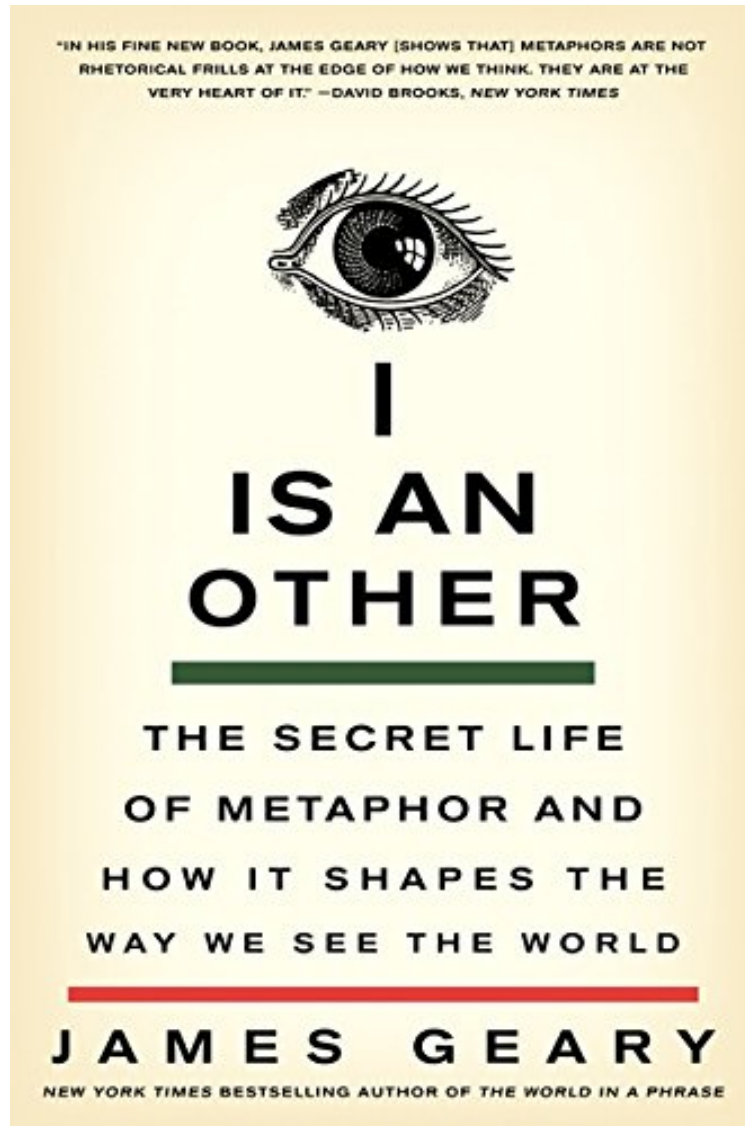


# I Is an Other: The Secret Life of Metaphor and How It Shapes the Way We See the World

James Geary

DOC | \*audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#304448 in Books James Geary 2012-01-24 2012-01-24 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .72 x 5.311, .54 #File Name: 0061710296320 pages I Is an Other The Secret Life of Metaphor and How It Shapes the Way We See the World | File size: 56.Mb

**James Geary : I Is an Other: The Secret Life of Metaphor and How It Shapes the Way We See the World** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised I Is an Other: The Secret Life of Metaphor and How It Shapes the Way We See the World:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. How and why the metaphor "lives a secret life all around us" By

Robert Morris Sometimes especially helpful information about a book's purposes and structure is provided near its conclusion and that is certainly true of this one as James Geary cites, in the final chapter, what Hart Crane characterizes as "the logic of metaphor" which Geary believes is the logic of human lives. "Metaphor impinges on everything, allowing us - poets and non-poets alike - to experience and think about the world in fluid, unusual ways. Metaphor is the bridge we fling between the utterly strange and the utterly familiar, between dice and drowned men's bones, between I and an other." (Page 226). The book's title refers to Arthur Rimbaud's summary explanation of his working method, "I is an other." Geary views it as "Metaphor's defining maxim, its secret formula, and its principal equation" and wrote this book in which he explains how and why metaphors are explicit comparisons of perceived realities. Here in Dallas, there is a Farmer's Market near the downtown area at which several merchants offer slices of fresh fruit as sample. In that spirit, I now offer a representative selection of brief excerpts from the narrative that suggest the thrust and flavor of Geary's thinking.

- o Metaphor "is at work in all fields of human endeavor, from economic and advertising, to politics and business, to science and psychology...Metaphorical thinking -- our instinct not just for describing but for [begin italics] comprehending [end italics] one thing in terms of another, for equating I with an other -- shapes our view of the world, and is essential to how we communicate, learn, discover, and invent. Metaphor is a way of thought long before it is a way with words." (Page 3)
- o "The ability to mind-read enables us to understand that what people do is not always what they think; how people act is not always how they feel; and what people mean is not always what they say, a process akin to pretend play; another activity in which people with ASD [Asperger's Syndrome] have difficulty engaging." (50)
- o "Priming experiments are case studies in the vitality of metaphorical language. A metaphor occurs when someone apprehends previously unapprehended relations between things. The metaphor perpetuates this fresh apprehension until, through time, core associations form. These associations cling fast to words themselves, eventually becoming so routine that they continue to appear long after the original relation has ceased to be consciously apprehended." (115)
- o "Parables and proverbs feature so prominently in folk wisdom and religious scripture because there is no way to convey spiritual truths other than to set them side by side with natural truths. The numinous is the nitty gritty. I is an other." (196)
- o "Synectics consultants use metaphor to spur business innovation; psychotherapists James Lawley and Penny Tompkins use it to inspire psychological insight. Through a process called symbolic modeling, they help clients create and explore metaphors around crucial emotions or personal dilemmas." (208)

Until reading this book, I was unaware of the fact that, as Geary describes it, metaphor "lives a secret life all around us." For example, we utter about one metaphor for every 10-15 words or about six metaphors a minute. I agree with Geary that gaining an understanding of the nature and extent of metaphor's presence in our lives (invoking a simile) is "like reading a book about that process." How important is it to gain that understanding? According to Aristotle, the mastery of metaphorical thinking is "a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars." The reader, for example, and another reader....

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I thought this author did a wonderful job of demonstrating how we may not recognize how ...

By Madone This Author takes a humble approach to the subject as though he's writing in the APA format not to steal any original ideas or get charged with plagiarism. The beauty of this info manual, is the very nature of the subject of metaphors is impossible to write, in an original document. Once you understand that it takes many repetitive utterance's before a metaphor sticks in the mind, you understand why a original metaphor must be conceived in a void of any language. Semiotics are visual metaphors (if you will). I thought this author did a wonderful job of demonstrating how we may not recognize how much we depend on metaphors to support the abstract as well as describing the indescribable. What would you name a new color that has never been seen? I bet you'd find a metaphor for assistance.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good overview of the subject

By zkcom1 The book itself wasn't very exciting in itself when I was reading it, but I came away from it becoming more aware of metaphors and their usage in everyday conversation. The way we use metaphors really gives us insight into our thought process as well. I look at it like this: for everything that our brains know and understand, such as the concept of what a car is, or what a restaurant is, there is a "node". Because of the limited size of our brain and the amount of information it's able to process at one time, we can't create brand new nodes every time we come across something new. So our brains attach new things and concepts to pre-existing nodes, as a shortcut. So if we come across a new food that's similar to a hamburger, instead of creating a new node for it, we simply link it to the "hamburger" node - that's where it's located in our brain. Over time, if we acquaint ourselves with this new food more often and it becomes commonplace, it becomes a known entity itself and our brain then creates a note for it, no longer needing to be linked to "hamburger" anymore - although that link will still be there due to the similarity. But we'll know of it straight out, instead of what we can compare it to.

Sherlock Holmes could glance at a bowler hat and tell that its owner's wife had ceased to love him. In this brilliant book about metaphor James Geary is no less astonishing, as he deciphers the subtle implications embedded in advertising slogans, familiar slang and government double-talk. You'll scarf down every page of *I Is an Other* and then ask for more. Michael Dirda, Pulitzer Prize-winning critic and author of *Book by Book* and *Classics for Pleasure* For lovers of language and fans of *Blink* and *Freakonomics*, New York Times bestselling author James Geary offers this

fascinating look at metaphors and their influence in every aspect of our lives, from art to medicine, psychology to the stock market.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . "Metaphorical thinking is the way we make sense of the world" and neurological research shows that humans experience pleasure when performing the "cognitive gymnastics" of deciphering metaphors to connect two dissimilar things, asserts Geary (*The World in a Phrase*) in a delightful examination that borrows for its title from a poem by Rimbaud, whose writing aimed to "upset conventional orders of perception." Tests on people who do not understand metaphors, such as those with Asperger's syndrome, uncover the roles that "mirror" and "Gnostic" neurons play in conceptual comprehension and long-term memory. Geary also analyzes how metaphors are used in advertising, scientific discoveries, economics, and politics. "Metaphors, once forgotten or ignored, are easily mistaken for objective facts," he warns, showing how metaphor "surreptitiously infiltrates our purchasing decisions." Voters, consumers, and investors interested in knowing how their decisions may be influenced by well-planned metaphors will be fascinated by Geary's adept explication of the metaphor's role in defining perceptions. (Feb.) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved. In his fine new book, James Geary [shows that] metaphors are not rhetorical frills at the edge of how we think. They are at the very heart of it. (David Brooks, *New York Times*) Smart fun for anyone fascinated by the play of language. . . . Geary traces the history of [metaphor] from Aristotle to Elvis. (Washington Post) The author further manages to weave together a fascinating amount of information. . . . *I Is an Other* really shines when it focuses on the simple yet profound . . . you'll never look at a metaphor the same way again metaphorically speaking. (New York Journal of Books) Geary . . . succeeds in making the case that metaphor is the meat of language and not a sauce. (Wall Street Journal) This book is a prism, refracting the white light of language into a kaleidoscopic celebration of its images and etymologies. (Ben Schott, author of *Schott's Original Miscellany* and *Schott's Almanacs*) This book is for everyone interested in the subtle operations of language and thought. . . . *I Is an Other* is one of those must-read books for this year, for any year. It deserves a wide audience, and it will find one. (Jay Parini, Professor of English and Creative Writing, Middlebury College and author of *Promised Land: Thirteen Books that Changed America*) Sherlock Holmes could glance at a bowler hat and tell that its owners wife had ceased to love him. In this brilliant book about metaphor James Geary is no less astonishing. . . . You'll scarf down every page of *I Is an Other* and then ask for more. (Michael Dirda, Pulitzer Prize-winning critic and author of *Book by Book* and *Classics for Pleasure*) Enchanting. . . . It is [its] playful celebration of meanings that makes this book optimistic. And though the subtitle has a whiff of conspiracy about it, the sheer ubiquity of metaphor in everyday life makes the book feel urgent. . . . addictive. . . . Geary writes with clarity and power. (The Independent) An illuminating study of metaphor in all its guises Required reading for anyone with even a passing interest in language. (Time Out London) From the Back Cover From President Obama's political rhetoric to the bursting of the housing bubble, from conversations to commercials, James Geary shows that every aspect of our day-to-day experience is molded by metaphor. Geary takes readers from Aristotle's investigation of metaphor right up to the latest neuroscientific insights into how metaphor works in the brain. Witty, persuasive, and original, *I Is an Other* explores metaphors effects on financial decision making, effective advertising, leadership, learning, and more. Romeo's exclamation *It is the East, and Juliet is the sun!* may be one of the most well-known metaphors in literature, but metaphor is more than a device of love-struck poets. As Geary demonstrates, metaphor has leaped off the page and landed with a mighty splash right in the middle of the stream of consciousness.